Observation of Institute of International Finance, Washington about India's External Debt

293. SHRI MOHINDFR SINGH LATHER :
SHRI E. BALANANDAN:
SHRI MOTURU HANUMANTHA RAO :
SHRI P.K. KUNJACHEN:
SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:
SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the revelation of the Washington based Institute of International Finance (IIF) and the New York based Manufacturers Hanover, a top US Bank in their identical reports that country's total external debt at the end of March, 1989 stood at Rs. 96320 crores and not Rs. 55000 crores as claimed by Government in pre-Budget Economic Survey and that t he debt service ratio is put at 38 per cent as against 24 per cents estimated by Government ;

(b) if so, what is the factual position in this regard stating the methodology adopted in arriving at the figures claimed by Government; and

(c) what is Government's reaction with regard to the observation made by the Institute and the U.S. Bank referred to in part (a) above ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The figure of foreign debt outstanding quoted in the question has been taken from the Country Report on India prepared by the Washington based Institt. of International Finance. The views and comments contained in this Report are those of IIF and as such Government do not consider it appropriate to comment on its contents. However, the foreign debt outstanding on all the four accounts i.e. Government Account, Non-Government Account, IMF Borrowings and External Commercial Borrowings is estimated to be about Rs. 68831 crores as on 31-3-1989 and debt service ratio is estimated to be about 24 per cent in 1988-89. The difference between the IIF estimates and the above figure are due to variations in coverage, timing and valuation. The figure of Rs. 55000 crores in the Economic Survey refers to the position at the end of March, 1988.

Madhya Pradesh Government's request for permitting the use of Forest Land for non-forestry purposes

294. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI :
SHRI CHANDAN SHARMA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Madhya Pradesh Government has requested the Central Government for authorising the State Government to permit upto 10 hectares of forest land to be used for non forestry purposes, which does not involve much damage to the forests as well, so that small developmental works do not get obstructed; and

(b) if so, what is Central Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI SUMATI ORAON) : (a) No such specific request has been received from the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

(b) Does not arise.